

1 The Honorable Board of Lander County Commissioners met for a Special Budget
2 Workshop in the Commission Chambers of the Lander County Courthouse and Administration
3 Building in Battle Mountain, Nevada, 50 State Route 305, on March 18, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

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5 **PRESENT: KATHLEEN V. ANCHO, COMMISSIONER**
6 **ART CLARK III, COMMISSIONER**
7 **JUDIE ALLAN, COMMISSIONER**
8 **PATSY WAITS, COMMISSIONER**
9 **BRYAN SPARKS, COMMISSIONER**
10 **KEITH WESTENGARD, COUNTY MANAGER**
11 **PEGGY SURLA, COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE**
12 **SADIE SULLIVAN, COUNTY CLERK**
13 **THEODORE HERRERA, DISTRICT ATTORNEY (by**
14 **teleconference)**

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17 (Let the record reflect the presence of a quorum of five commissioners. Let the record
18 reflect the presence of Austin via teleconference.)

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21 **9:00 A.M.**

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23 Chairman Ancho called the meeting to order.

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25 Commissioner Sparks led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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27 Chairman Ancho called for a moment of silence. This was immediately followed by
28 County Manager Keith Westengard, calling for an emergency meeting to discuss a few items.
29 Commissioner Allan wanted to know if a motion was needed in that regard. Commissioner Waits
30 stated that the Chair could recess by herself.

31 The County Manager went on to explain that his first request was that they cancel the
32 next regularly scheduled commission meeting in light of the COVID-19 situation. Commissioner
33 Allan made a motion to cancel the next regularly scheduled commission meeting of March 26,
34 2020. There was a second by Commissioner Waits. Mr. Westengard stated that he will get it
35 published in the paper and posted around town.

36 **Motion to approve:** Commissioner Allan;

37 **Seconded by:** Commissioner Waits;

38 **Ayes:** All;

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40 The County Manager went on to explain his second request. He asked to cancel the
41 Special Budget Workshop meetings, also in light of the COVID-19 situation. He has been in
42 contact with the Department of Taxation asking if it's possible to extend the submission of the
43 tentative budget. It appears that it is not possible to do that. If they would like have the budget
44 signed and submitted as it is it could be submitted to the Department of Taxation on time and
45 adjustments could be made during the Final Budget hearing, and before the Final Budget

46 submission date of June 1st. This would not be the budget that we would end up with for the next
47 fiscal year.

48 Commissioner Allan: We're here now and we don't know the future with this issue and
49 she's okay with moving forward.

50 Commissioner Sparks: He's not okay with waiting, in case something prevented us from
51 being able to hold a future budget hearing.

52 Chairman Ancho: She is also okay with moving forward.

53 Keith Westengard: According to his understanding the current budget would just rollover
54 into the next year. He asked District Attorney Ted Herrera and Fiscal Officer Cindy Benson if
55 that is correct and they responded affirmatively.

56 Commissioner Waits: If we don't file timely they lock us into the budget of the previous
57 year. She is also okay with continuing.

58 L.C. EMS Kim Schacht: There are more than ten people in the commission chamber at
59 this time and not keeping the recommended six feet distance. We can't afford to lose people to
60 illness and she recommends cancelling the meeting.

61 County Health Officer Brandy Bengoa: The governor did say that non-essential meetings
62 should be cancelled and not over ten in a group..

63 Commissioner Clark: He agrees with Kim but is outnumbered right now.

64 Keith Westengard: He has been communicating with the Department of Taxation,
65 community and state health people. It's not just his idea and we need to take this seriously and to
66 limit our exposure. He then requested a closed session to pass on some information.

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68 CLOSED SESSION FROM 9:10 - 9:30 A.M.

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70 Chairman Ancho called the meeting back to order.

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72 Commissioner Clark: He motions to postpone the meeting for a future date.

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74 There was no immediate second.

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76 Rita Rogers: She states she is leaving and the budget can be done without her. She thinks
77 they should take it more seriously and they may approve her budget, or not.

78 Chairman Ancho: Calls for order and calmness.

79 Commissioner Sparks: He went ahead and seconded the motion to postpone the Budget
80 Workshop meetings.

81 **Motion to approve:** Commissioner Clark;

82 **Seconded by:** Commissioner Sparks;

83 **Ayes:** All;

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85 Keith Westengard: He went on to explain some talking points he had written down. He
86 would like to be able to give flexibility to work from home and still be paid. He wants to get with
87 the Sheriff, Public Works, and Senior Center. We need to protect the employees' health and well-
88 being, wages, and all EMS, fire, and Sheriff's employees.

89 We need to address the needs of the elderly, for food banks, baby food, food distribution,
90 mobile pick-up for restaurants and possibly mobile setups for test kits.

91 He will be talking with the Local Emergency Planning Committee, the hospital, and with
92 Emergency Management.

93 The discussion continued on the situation. Chairman Ancho mentioned that the hospital
94 does have plans they are working with. The District Attorney stated that they may discuss all this
95 under Emergency Management and Protocols. Commissioner Waits is worried about Austin
96 being closed off and without WiFi. They may have to go with an on-call basis at the courthouse.

97 There was discussion about the Governor stating that people needed to be removed from
98 hotels and motels and how to approach that, especially with the people that are actually living in
99 them. Commissioner Allan was wondering how you would enforce something like that. It was
100 mentioned that the Health Department would be asked to look into those issues. The D.A. would
101 like to see the actual order on this matter and doing proclamations and declarations for the
102 counties.

103 Commissioner Sparks then brought the discussion back for clarification as to who may
104 have time off. Keith Westengard had spoken with the Union representative and the Union Repre-
105 sentative wanted to know what the Commission wants to do.

106 Commissioner Ancho: The Governor has closed all State offices. Let's look into what the
107 county will be doing.

108 Commissioner Allan: Leave it to the employer discretion. She is worried about
109 discriminations. Possibly rotate through.

110 Commissioner Sparks: He's not willing to do that.

111 Kim Schacht (L.C. EMS): They should not have to tell everyone about their medical
112 issues. Exposure is everything. As long as they are working, and working from home can do that.

113 Lesley Bunch (Recorder): Teachers are giving out packets to students. DMV is closed
114 through April 6th. She can have employees do other things and has talked to other offices in the
115 state. She is considering offering staggering of employees.

116 Commissioner Clark: It's up to the elected official on what they want to do. At least
117 someone has to be there. He's heard federal money might be coming into the States to help.

118 Commissioner Ancho: Elko has closed their Sheriff's office to the public. We need to
119 figure out these options. Are we letting the public in or not? We need to figure this out.

120 Lesley Bunch: Many offices have drop boxes, online services, and take credit cards. We
121 need to keep the employees paid and healthy.

122 Commissioner Allan: An extension for paying taxes is being offered federally. Think
123 about some non-essential offices to work from home.

124 District Attorney Herrera: It is up to the elected official and their employees.

125 Keith Westengard: That's what he was looking for, that flexibility. We want to all work
126 together to get through this, and protect the counties.

127 Bert Ramos: Elected or not, they are Union employees and we need to make a decision
128 and it falls on the commissioners to decide. The employees are Union protected and it needs to
129 be across the board.

130 Commissioner Waits: Patsy made a motion to approve a Declaration of Emergency, This
131 is also to authorize respective Department Heads to exercise administrative leniency with
132 emergency powers to direct appropriate staffing levels in their departments. Also to allow the
133 county manager to continue handling the resources available to our citizens. The motion was
134 seconded by Commissioner Clark. The motion was voted and carried.

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137 **Motion to approve:** Commissioner Waits;
138 **Seconded by:** Commissioner Clark;
139 **Ayes:** All;

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141 Further discussion and comments were made.

142 Laken Sullivan: At the School Board meeting last night we were told that the teachers are
143 preparing packets that will be available on Monday. This is a challenge for working parents. At
144 this time the daycare is still open but she doesn't want her kids there. Commissioner Clark asked
145 if the teachers are available to help the students. Laken said that they've been directed to contact
146 every student, every day.

147 Shannon Berumen: She provided some clarification on the State offices. Her direction
148 has been coming from the University and State offices are being closed, not just to the public,
149 and people are being sent home. Also hiring has been stopped so there won't an Extension
150 Educator for the time being. She is currently working from home and Keith will be deciding on
151 her position going forward.

152 Lura Duvall: A lot of fear is going around with the schools closed and this puts parents in
153 a bad situation. She would like to see the courthouse closed for two weeks to help calm
154 everyone.

155 Various thoughts were voiced about the situation, including that it will probably get
156 worse, and that the President asks that people heed the warnings.

157 Commissioner Allan mentioned that the Governor stated non-essential businesses be
158 closed for 30 days. Commissioner Ancho mentioned that schools back east are closing for the
159 rest of the school year. Denise Fortune stated that she may want to close but they're not able to-
160 courts are essential. They may close somewhat to the public.

161 District Attorney Herrera: This applies to his office and District Court also. They may
162 close somewhat to the public but still have things they need to provide for court.

163 Sadie Sullivan: Her office will be open for election items that are moving forward. She
164 will keep Keith and the commissioners updated as time goes on.

165 Commissioner Waits: She's sure that all departments have deadlines on things they are
166 working on and will advise of exceptions and waivers that may apply for citizens that may not be
167 able to meet the timeframes.

168 Keith Westengard: He had a question on the declaration. The D.A. said that we can go
169 with the approved one and it can be modified later. He also confirmed that they wanted to
170 continue with the Health Board meeting the next day as scheduled.

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173 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission at this time, Commissioner Clark moved to adjourn the meeting of March 18, 2020. Seconded by Commissioner Sparks, the motion was voted and carried. **ADJOURNED.**

Meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m.



**CHAIRMAN OR VICE CHAIRMAN OF
THE BOARD OF LANDER COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS AND THE LANDER
COUNTY LIQUOR BOARD**

ATTEST: Sadie Sullivan
LANDER COUNTY CLERK